

## Joel Roberts Poinsett to Andrew Jackson, March 21, 1833, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### JOEL R. POINSETT TO JACKSON.

Private

Charleston, March 21, 1833.

*My dear Sir*, I had the pleasure yesterday to receive your letter of the 6th March by the hands of Col. Drayton, who arrived here in tolerable health. I congratulate you and the nation on returning tranquillity, and I may be allowed to express to you the gratitude I feel for the wisdom and decision of your counsels in this trying occasion. The tariff bill is certainly not exactly what we could have wished, nor such as we might have obtained at the next session of congress; but it has served as a pretext to the nullifiers to assume a pacific attitude and we are satisfied. I did not write to you during the sitting of the Convention at Columbia because Mr. McCrady was instructed to write daily to Mr. McLane and give you an exact and detailed account of the proceedings of that body. He may not have informed you of what I have since learnt.

The *movement* party are not satisfied with the decision of the Convention. J. L. Wilson, once Governor of the state, Turnbull and others of the same character were anxious to go on, and continue the agitation in the state. The Leaders were compelled to yield in some measure to this disposition, or they would have lost all influence over their party. The silly ordinance with which they closed their labours is the fruit of that compromise. The proposal to pass a test oath was abandoned, and the Union party is not called upon to resist any new act of tyranny. I told them, that they might make any declarations of their

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political faith they thought proper, assert any abstract rights they pleased, and so long as they did no more and did not attempt to carry them out into practice, we should remain quiet. I think it now important to remain quite tranquil, for there are so many causes of discord among them, that they will break into pieces as soon as opposition is removed. Our action now must be directed to the States around us. There is a party in all these states in favour of Mr. Calhoun and his heretical doctrines, and this faction will everywhere be increased by Mr. Clay's personal adherents, for the nullifiers, who will soon assume some more popular title, have broke ground already in this state in favor of Mr. Clay. Mischief is ever a most active principle and must be counteracted with activity.

I am disposed to form a party in all the states for the preservation of the Union against all such combinations, a party which may be called in to the aid of the friends of the Union in any state where the Monster Disunion may show his head, whether in the form of nullification or in any other hideous shape. If we had been so succoured in the first instance all this trouble would have been spared and the disgrace of the state avoided. The objection which is made to this proposal by some of my friends here, that there will not be enough of opposition to it to make such a party efficient. has no weight with me. If the object were to exalt any individual the objection would be valid; but as the only object would be to aid the union party in maintaining the union in any state, where it may be endangered and to sustain the measures of the administration to promote the same object without any regard to party politics I cannot think opposition necessary to its existence.

I read with great interest the advice you give as to [the] course we ought to have adopted. It should have been followed implicitly, except the general attendance of our members in the nullifying convention, had the conduct of the Nullifiers justified resistance to their enactments. We will now exert ourselves to heal the wounds, which their rashness has inflicted upon this community, and spare no pains to wrest the power from the hands of men, who have so wantonly abused the trust confided to them by the people.

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As I have kept in safe deposit the few arms I drew from the forts I shall be able to restore them all in the condition in which I received them. I watched the course of events vigilantly and altho' every measure was taken to forward them to their destination if circumstances should render it necessary they were not sent from the city.

I shall write to you tomorrow on a subject of great interest to the success of our party in this state.

I am, dear Sir, respectfully and faithfully